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RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 7706
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 5805
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 1622
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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA, PM

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TAGS: BR PREL MARR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE JOBIM

REF: A. BRASILIA 93
1B. BRASILIA 175

11. (C) Ambassador Sobel met with Brazilian Minister of Defense Nelson Jobim Feb. 13 to discuss Jobim's upcoming visit to Washington, regional security and progress on defense cooperation. Jobim agreed with Ambassador Sobel's outline of possible areas for discussion during his March visit to Washington, including further discussion of a defense cooperation agreement. He also signaled that Brazil would be open to discussions regarding negotiation of a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), similar to that concluded with France. Chief of Ministry Staff Murilo Marques Barboza said that a GSOMIA had been discussed in the past, but had broken down over arrangements for "inspections" of Brazilian facilities. This probably reflects Brazilian sensitivities over allowing U.S. access to military facilities, even with reciprocal access to those in the U.S. Jobim and Barboza indicated openness to renewing a dialogue on a GSOMIA, but in order to complete such an agreement, the "inspections" will need a clearer characterization as reciprocal visits. Jobim also expressed interest in technology transfers, particularly as they could apply to Brazilian plans to modernize its military. Ambassador Sobel acknowledged that we were aware of Brazilian interest in U.S. submarine technology and were preparing what we hoped would be a constructive response.

12. (C) In a separate meeting with MOD Chief of Staff Barboza, DATT was told that the MOD's response to the U.S. was aimed at reaching consensus with the USG that could gain President Lula's support as a deliverable for Jobim's visit to Washington, circumventing MRE obstruction. This was the tactic that led to completion of the SOFA with France earlier this year. Barboza indicated that the French SOFA used language that did not provoke constitutional objections as previous proposals for U.S.-Brazil SOFAs have. He counselled observing the reaction of Brazil's Congress to the French SOFA (and completing the DCA) before working on a U.S.-Brazil version. Barboza also expressed caution on the possible GSOMIA, noting that no other information sharing arrangement to which Brazil is a party would involve visits. He did, however, leave the door open to exploration of a formula that could work for both sides.

13. (C) Jobim told Ambassador Sobel that the Brazilian

government shared the Ambassador's concern about the possibility of Venezuela exporting instability. He believed that President Chavez has been saber rattling to distract from internal problems. Brazil supports creation of a "South American Defense Council" to bring Chavez into the mainstream of the continent and provide reassurance that there is no security threat. Jobim believed that isolating Venezuela would lead to further posturing from Chavez and a greater risk of spreading instability among neighboring countries.

¶4. (C) EMBASSY COMMENT: However impractical the suggestion may seem, it follows the traditional Brazilian policy of trying to be everyone's friend by attempting to incorporate Chavez' idea for defense cooperation into a supposed containment strategy.

SOBEL